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New York

President:	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Tunisia	Mr. Mejdoub
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Briefing by Mr. Kamel Morjane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-46546 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Briefing by Mr. Kamel Morjane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Belgium, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Namibia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. De Ruyt (Belgium), Mr. Theron (Namibia), Mr. Gasana (Rwanda) and Mr. Jokonya (Zimbabwe) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kamel Morjane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Morjane to take a seat at the Council table.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Morjane. It is my understanding that he is also prepared to answer questions and provide clarifications if need be.

I wish to point out that this is going to be the last time that Mr. Morjane will participate in our meetings. On this occasion, I wish, on behalf of the Council, to pay special tribute to Mr. Morjane for his consistent and tireless efforts in moving the peace process forward in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Through his diplomatic skills, tenacity and effective leadership of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Morjane has forged good relations with the various parties and has earned the full confidence of the Security Council. We note with satisfaction that Mr. Morjane, while relinquishing his present functions, will continue to contribute his enormous talent to the United Nations family by returning to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

At the end of the briefing, I shall give the floor to Council members who wish to make comments or ask questions. I invite members to raise their hand if they wish to take the floor.

I welcome the Secretary-General, who is with us this morning, and give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: We meet at an important moment in the development of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Over the past few months, there have been several positive developments. The ceasefire is holding at the confrontation lines, notwithstanding some allegations of violations, which the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is investigating. Most of the forces have withdrawn in accordance with the Harare disengagement plan. MONUC's relations with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo remain positive and cooperative. I had a very constructive meeting with Presidents Kabila and Kagame in Lusaka earlier this month in the margins of the summit of the Organization of African Unity. I was encouraged that they both pledged to improve dialogue and cooperation, undertake confidence-building measures and avoid incitement.

However, as members are all aware, the restoration of peace and stability in the Congo will ultimately rest on the success of the inter-Congolese dialogue. I would therefore like to commend the tireless efforts of the facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, that have led to the adoption by all parties of the Declaration of Fundamental Principles of the Inter-Congolese Political Negotiations.

Like you, Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Kamel Morjane, who has served very effectively as my Special Representative in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As you mentioned, even though he is leaving his current post, he is returning to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, where he has served for many years. I am sure he will continue to make a very constructive contribution to the work of the Organization. We here in the Council will probably have the opportunity of seeing him from time to time. I think that, during his service, he has helped bring the parties back to the path of negotiation and has given the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo new hope of escaping the cycle of violence and instability. I would also say that, through his political and diplomatic skills, his long experience with the region and its difficult issues and the relations he has developed with all the parties, Mr. Morjane has served with great distinction the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as Africa and the United Nations.

Mr. Morjane's successor will face considerable challenges. The third phase of MONUC's deployment is about to begin and, as Mr. Morjane has informed the Security Council, we are still far from the point in the Democratic Republic of the Congo where the peace process is irreversible. Only last week, three respected non-governmental organizations told us of the appalling humanitarian and human rights situation encountered by millions of Congolese and of serious obstacles still to be overcome. Perhaps chief among these is the central issue of the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of the armed groups, without which progress in other areas will be very difficult. The continued resolve of the Security Council, which has been steadfast in its support of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, will be essential in the process as we move forward. I trust that the Council will continue to display the same high level of interest in the challenges and opportunities facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo as it has over the past two years of MONUC's existence.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now give the floor to Mr. Morjane.

Mr. Morjane (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to express my gratitude and thanks for the great honour of being allowed to participate in this open meeting devoted to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is further evidence of the Council's interest in settling the conflict that has shaken that country, which is essential for peace in Africa.

The historic visit of an important Security Council delegation, led by Ambassador Levitte, to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region last May, as well as the Council's regular meetings and consultations on the situation there, are striking demonstrations of its commitment and tireless determination to spare no effort to support and accompany the people of the Congo and all the peoples of the region on the long and difficult road to peace and harmony.

As the mission relevantly noted following its visit on the ground, the prospects and real opportunities for a successful conclusion to the concerted efforts to restore peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and throughout the region have never been as great as they are today. Respect for the ceasefire, at least between the signatories; the disengagement and redeployment of forces, although not fully accomplished; the political changes in Kinshasa; preparations for the inter-Congolese dialogue; and the deployment of military contingents of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) are certainly positive signs of that favourable situation.

However, we must also note that peace is not yet certain and that there will undoubtedly be pitfalls and obstacles along the way. The recalcitrance of certain parties and the temptation to preserve the status quo are indications of the anxieties and fears concerning the difficulties threatening peace. In the immediate future, it will be crucial for all parties to demonstrate restraint and a spirit of compromise and responsibility by adhering strictly to the ceasefire and by refraining from taking any action and act that could contribute to the deterioration of the situation. Only the pursuit of the dialogue and effective cooperation to strengthen the

climate of trust between the parties will make it possible to overcome the reluctance, fears and doubts of the parties concerning each other's true will and commitment. All of the parties must transcend mistrust and resentment to build trust and peace through dialogue.

It is therefore with satisfaction and hope that we perceive the continuation of contact and dialogue among the leaders of the region. It is in that context that we see the initiative of the Secretary-General to bring Presidents Kagame and Kabila together at Lusaka, at the margins of the summit of the Organization of African Unity. This dialogue and exchange should be pursued without fail, because cooperation and understanding between the leaders are the only effective way to identify viable arrangements to ensure the peaceful coexistence between the peoples in the region by addressing together the factors of instability and violence that hinder development and progress.

The issue of the armed groups whose attacks and violent actions, especially in Kivu, have threatened the peace efforts urgently requires a visionary strategy with a view in particular to establishing an effective ceasefire throughout Congolese territory, as well as the remobilization of all parties in the implementation of their obligations in accordance with the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours, Rwanda and Uganda in particular, must show political will and an unwavering commitment to reconciling security concerns and requirements for regional stability with the fundamental need to work for the rehabilitation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Not acting in this way to restore the hope for peace will make the present moment a mere lull before an escalation of violence and a resumption of hostilities, which would be fatal for peace. This imposes on all parties not only the pressing obligation to continue to respect the ceasefire, to refrain from any action that would create a climate of tension or engender violence, including attacks by armed groups, and especially to cooperate with MONUC frankly and without hesitation.

All of the parties must stop creating difficulties, obstructions and obstacles by making their respect for their commitments dependent on conditions or demands intended only to delay. The frank cooperation and facilitation that the parties to the peace process must provide MONUC in order to contribute to the effectiveness of its deployment and its operations certainly include firm and credible guarantees for the security and freedom of movement of the civilian and military personnel of the Mission. I must remind the parties that this also includes the need for them to show good faith and to build mutual trust, not only by favouring consultation and dialogue, as we have indicated, but also by refraining from using delaying tactics and making extreme or threatening declarations. The preparations for the plan for the disarmament of the armed groups, which we call disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement (DDRRR), as well as the preparations for the plan for the withdrawal of foreign forces, require the total cooperation of the parties with MONUC and the Joint Military Commission.

Allow me to welcome the initiative of the Ugandan Government, which has set up a partial withdrawal plan for its troops and has begun to implement it. We would also like to welcome the willingness recently expressed by Namibia to proceed with the withdrawal of its troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the coming months.

For MONUC, Security Council resolution 1355 (2001) is the framework and plan for all of these future activities for the next stage. The disarmament of armed groups, the withdrawal of foreign forces, the demilitarization of Kisangani, the freedom of river navigation — all of these objectives have been set for MONUC. Certainly, when all of these actions begin to be implemented, along with the start of the inter-Congolese dialogue, the point of no return to war may have been achieved. Peace can be lasting only if it is accompanied by a joint project between former belligerents. We all should devote ourselves now to the design of such a project, in order to make the natural resources that fuel the war today factors of economic cooperation and necessary, indivisible common interest. I am convinced that water, the source of life and energy, could be for the countries of the Great Lakes today what coal and steel were for the Europe of yesteryear.

Finally, I would like to welcome the efforts of President Masire, the facilitator, and his team. I fervently hope that they will manage to begin the

dialogue on 20 August, as planned. The success of the peace process depends on it.

I will soon have to leave MONUC, as you, Mr. President, just announced and as the Secretary-General has confirmed. I would like to thank you for the very kind words you expressed to me. Having to leave MONUC for pressing personal reasons, I would like to ask for your patience as I publicly and solemnly address a few words of thanks to those who have helped me to carry out this difficult but exciting mission that the Secretary-General did me the honour of entrusting to me. I can begin only by thanking the members of the Council for the unwavering support they have given me, which allowed me, especially at the most difficult times, to continue to believe that this mission was not impossible. I would like to express my utmost gratitude.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, who gave me this great opportunity to serve two causes that are very dear to me: peace and Africa. I hope that I was able to measure up to his confidence. I would like to assure him that I have been proud to be his Special Representative.

I could not have accomplished my mandate without the trust and cooperation of all parties, who even in moments of uncertainty and disagreement have never let me down, whether within the Political Committee or in our bilateral relations. For that, I will be eternally grateful.

This is also an opportunity for me to thank my Government for having allowed me to carry out this mission and fully benefit from Tunisia's policy of moderation and tolerance, for which it is known in Africa and throughout the world. I would also like to mention with great gratitude the diplomatic corps in Kinshasa and my colleagues from the United Nations system for the unconditional support and the friendly welcome I received from them. Without their active solidarity, the peace process would not exist today. I would also like to thank my colleagues in the Secretariat, particularly those from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, for their support and coopération. I must also mention with great emotion the Congolese, all Congolese, of every social category, who have done me the kindness of showing me their confidence and support in various ways. I hope I have not let them down. I will remember them warmly and will maintain the hope of seeing their great country soon regain the unity of its territory and peace with all its neighbours.

I shall conclude with a few words for those without whom my presence here would have no meaning, those who have built this Mission and who, in the field, create a real chance for peace every day. I would like to mention all of my colleagues in MONUC, both civilians and military personnel, from the ordinary soldiers to the Force Commander, General Diallo. I would like to express my sincere gratitude and loyalty to them.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Morjane for his comprehensive briefing. It is regrettable that this is the last meeting in which we will discuss with him the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo together. However, as was said by the Secretary-General, we will have more opportunities in the future to meet. This gladdens us.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council who wish to make comments or ask questions.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): This morning, in the presence of the Secretary-General, we are experiencing a moment of genuine emotion. The Ambassador of Belgium will soon express the views and the hopes of the entire European Union, but I should like to make a few comments in my national capacity.

First, I wish to express the real sadness we feel today in saying good-bye for now to Kamel Morjane, an outstanding Special Representative of the Secretary-General. During the last 20 months, Kamel Morjane has devoted all his efforts to advancing the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Together, this morning, we can measure the progress made, thanks to him, since the end of 1999. Kamel Morjane has demonstrated exceptional courage, daily dedication, extraordinary political sense and tireless will. Like all my Council colleagues, I would like to pay a heartfelt tribute to him. Kamel Morjane is an example for all of us. He has shown to the entire Congolese people the best possible image of the United Nations. Through him, I would like to express to all the personnel of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) the gratitude of France.

The peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo today is on a sound footing. The ceasefire

between the parties to the Lusaka Agreement is being respected and the implementation of this text has begun. The disengagement and the redeployment of forces is almost complete. The parties to the Agreement are working on drawing up comprehensive plans for the withdrawal of foreign forces and for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement (DDRRR) of armed groups. These plans must be finalized as soon as possible. Another crucial aspect of the peace process — the inter-Congolese dialogue — is also being prepared under the leadership of the facilitator and his representative in Kinshasa. The preparatory meeting is planned for 20 August. The dialogue itself must be held as quickly as possible, and preferably — I stress this — on Congolese soil.

Moreover, and even if this point does not fall directly within the competence or the action of Mr. Morjane or MONUC, the serious issue of the exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be mentioned here. Since the publication of the report of the Panel of Experts last April, this issue has been the subject of growing awareness among the international community and is emerging more and more clearly as one of the driving forces of the conflict and of serious violations of human rights. We hope that the publication of the addendum to this report, in the fall, will attest to the progress made in resolving this serious issue.

The peace process in Burundi, which is inseparable from the settlement of the crisis in the region, is also undergoing important developments, thanks to the commitment and the perseverance of the mediator of the Arusha peace process, Mr. Mandela. However, current realities, unfortunately, are showing us the extent to which this process remains a fragile one, full of pitfalls.

We see that the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region, where the Council went on a mission in May, has undergone positive developments that are opening up a real window of opportunity. However, as was emphasized by Mr. Morjane a few minutes ago, the dynamic of peace has not yet reached the point of no return. Numerous difficulties and certain major obstacles must still be overcome.

Given the situation, which is still unstable, our Council must have a clear vision of the tasks to be fulfilled. In our view, we need first and foremost to maintain and to intensify the gains. Respect for the ceasefire requires an ongoing daily effort, and we encourage all bilateral contacts between belligerents, within the framework of the Lusaka Agreement, to improve confidence between the parties. From that perspective, the meeting to be held under the auspices of the Secretary-General between President Kabila and President Kagame is a first step in the right direction.

It is also vital that MONUC be able to carry out its necessary verification work. I am thinking in particular of disengagement in Equateur Province, where Mr. Bemba's Mouvement pour la libération du Congo (MLC) has moved only with delays, which explains why MONUC has not been able to verify such movement on the ground. MONUC must also attest to the actual departure of the Forces armées congolaises from the positions that they are still occupying in Katanga, in contradiction to the Harare sub-plans. For this reason and for many others, it is absolutely necessary for all parties to cooperate fully every day with MONUC. Ambassador Morjane rightly insisted on this. In this regard, the Security Council cannot accept — today, tomorrow or yesterday — United Nations personnel being subjected to pressures or threats. Our Council is determined to act with the greatest possible firmness on this issue.

The parties to the conflict must comply with all their commitments and respect all their obligations. One of the major obstacles today to the continuation of the peace process is unquestionably the delay in the demilitarization of Kisangani. The demilitarization of this city, which the Council had demanded a year ago in resolution 1304 (2000), today symbolizes the peace process and reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Following Rwanda and Uganda, the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma) must now abide by this obligation without further delay. What is at stake here is its credibility as a partner in the peace process. The Security Council calls on all those who have influence on the RCD-Goma, in particular Rwanda, to convey this demand and to finally achieve implementation of this decisive step of the peace process.

The activities of armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as in Rwanda and Burundi, form another serious threat to the return of peace. The signatories of the Lusaka Agreement are together preparing a DDRRR

programme. There is a need to begin tackling this difficult issue immediately. The first stage consists of interrupting and preventing all forms of support to these groups and to begin implementing DDRRR wherever possible. We have taken note with great interest of President Kabila's offer to launch the movement on a voluntary basis, with the 3,000 fighters who are now quartered in two camps in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. MONUC is ready to help, within its means, and this is why the donor community must also provide its full support to United Nations actions.

The economic and humanitarian situation remains disastrous, despite the outstanding action in the field carried out in particularly difficult conditions by the United Nations agencies and the non-governmental organizations. The reopening of the rivers will provide a breath of air to the Congolese people by improving the delivery of supplies to the cities. Here, too, all parties must assist MONUC in re-establishing this vital link among the Congolese. Beyond that, the international community is ready to provide its full assistance to support the progress of the peace process, to ease the suffering of the Congolese people and to assist the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in implementing its ambitious economic reform programme. All parties, moreover, must ensure strict respect for human rights in the sectors they control. Together with the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Garreton, who is currently in the region, the Council intends to continue to devote its attention to this question. There can be no settlement or reconciliation if human rights violations are not punished. There can be no impunity; there must no longer be any impunity.

As I said earlier, the friends of Mr. Morjane — who are the friends of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region — are very sad to see him leave. However, the Security Council is unanimously determined to continue to follow, in the same impartial manner that characterized all of Mr. Morjane's work, the course that he has charted: that of the implementation, without any concessions, of the agreements signed by the parties themselves and of all the resolutions of the Security Council.

In due time, together with his successor — as soon as he or she is appointed — it is that path that we intend to follow in the service of peace and in the interests of the people of the Congo and of the entire region.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this open briefing on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Today's meeting, which is taking place at a very crucial stage of the peace process, makes it possible for the members of the Council and for the other participating States to assess together the situation and the prospects for peace.

I should like also to welcome among us the Secretary-General and to express to him our deep appreciation for the tireless efforts he has been making in the search for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Africa and throughout the world. Let me also thank him for the important statement he made.

My delegation would like also to thank Ambassador Kamel Morjane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his extensive briefing. We would like to pay tribute to him for the outstanding role he has played as head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). His dedication and his personal efforts, as well as the efforts made by the Force Commander, General Diallo, and by all of the personnel of the Mission, to restore peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — often in very difficult conditions — deserve our greatest appreciation and support.

The assessment just presented by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative shows that progress has been made in the peace process. We are pleased with this state of affairs. However, they also pointed out that that progress is fragile, that the point of no return has not yet been reached and that there are still obstacles to be overcome. The Mission sent by the Security Council to the Great Lakes region had concluded that the momentum gained could easily be lost and that therefore every effort needed to be made to maintain the dynamic of peace and to make it irreversible. Indeed, the primary responsibility in that respect lies with the parties themselves. They must abide by their commitments under the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, the Kampala plan and the Harare sub-plans on the disengagement and redeployment of forces and to comply with the resolutions of the Security Council.

We must therefore call once again on the parties to finalize and implement the plans for the orderly withdrawal of all of the foreign forces from the

territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as the plans for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement of armed groups.

The Council has been concerned in recent days by the lack of cooperation on the part of the Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) with MONUC. We call upon the RCD once again to make the necessary efforts and fully to cooperate with MONUC.

Furthermore, we would recall the need for the urgent demilitarization of the town of Kisangani, as required by the Security Council in its resolution 1304 (2000). As has been repeatedly stressed, including during the discussions between the Security Council mission and the parties, Kisangani has a symbolic value.

While the responsibility for the consolidation of progress in the peace process lies primarily with the parties themselves, the United Nations and in particular the Security Council also have an important role to play in assisting and encouraging the parties to move forward and also in continuing to support the efforts of MONUC.

The information we have received on the resumption of the activities of armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a source of deep concern and requires particular attention. We are pleased with the results of the meeting that took place, in parallel with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit at Lusaka, between Presidents Kabila and Kagame, at the initiative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and we encourage the continuation of this dialogue. We believe that the outcome of that meeting requires urgent follow-up as well as the joint efforts of all of the actors involved.

The process of the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement of armed groups is among the most important elements of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, and the achievement of peace and security in the subregion is strongly contingent upon it. We must seize the opportunity that presents itself today. MONUC must therefore have the necessary resources at its disposal to fully play the role that is expected of it.

Another important element of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement is the inter-Congolese dialogue. We appreciate the efforts made by Mr. Masire and his colleagues, and we hope that the dialogue will begin as soon as possible and in the best possible conditions, which will allow the Congolese people to devote themselves to the future of their country without any foreign interference.

The humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in the eastern part of the country, remains a source of deep concern and requires massive aid on the part of the international community. In this regard, we welcome the considerable efforts made by humanitarian agencies, in cooperation with MONUC, to relieve the suffering of the people affected, and we call upon all of the parties to facilitate and to support those efforts.

The Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will continue its investigations in order to submit an annex to its report, as requested by the Security Council. In this connection, we recall the importance of putting an end to the illegal exploitation of the natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we call upon all parties concerned to fully cooperate with the Panel of Experts.

The Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region had noted a strong desire on the part of the Congolese people to bring about peace and national reconciliation, and to achieve development. The international community is called upon to assist them, inter alia, through initiatives accompanying the return of peace, including support for the country's economic recovery. We believe also that the United Nations must begin to prepare for the reconstruction phase, which would be a manifestation of the peace dividend for the Congolese people.

It has long been stressed that the close links among the problems afflicting the Great Lakes region demand a comprehensive regional conception of peace and security. Here, the convening, under United Nations and Organization of African Unity auspices, of an international conference on peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region could help lay the foundation for peaceful coexistence, good-neighbourliness, cooperation and development in the interests of all the peoples of the region.

In this period of transition between the second and third phases of MONUC deployment, there have been some positive developments, which we must support. During the third phase, MONUC will have to shoulder important new duties and, to do this, will need substantial resources.

We expect the withdrawal of foreign forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to be effective, rapid and complete; that would make it possible to restore the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also expect the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement of armed groups to take place without delay.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a vast country with enormous potential. Its present problems can be overcome with continued political will among the Congolese themselves and among their neighbours. The international community can provide very effective assistance. My country, which participated in United Nations peacekeeping efforts in the Congo a generation ago, is today contributing to MONUC with a guard unit and with military observers, who are there to help the parties achieve peace.

We hope that the dialogue that has begun among the heads of State of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda will continue and develop, to make it possible to speed the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and to promote peace, security, stability and cooperation in the region. The advent of peace and of a solution to the problems of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be a positive turning point for the entire continent of Africa.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Bangladesh appreciates the presence, and the statement, of the Secretary-General at this important meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We believe that his contacts with the leaders of the region advance the cause of peace.

We also appreciate the briefing by Ambassador Kamel Morjane. Looking back at the situation as it existed a year ago, one must recognize the progress that has been made. The challenge now before us on the Democratic Republic of the Congo is to see how we can give the peace process momentum and real substance.

Over the past two years, the Security Council and its members have made considerable efforts to resolve the conflict. The Council held several high-level meetings, including meetings with the leaders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of other countries of the region. Serious efforts have been made to facilitate dialogue and understanding among them. In addition, the Council sent two missions to the Great Lakes region in the course of about a year. The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) was authorized in February 2000, and the Council remains committed to supporting the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement.

All those efforts have not been in vain. The parties have remained committed to the Lusaka Agreement — of course, realizing the Council's strong support for that agreement. They signed the Kampala disengagement plan and the Harare sub-plans. The ceasefire has been holding for several months now. The leaders have also met bilaterally and have talked. The basic problems over the inter-Congolese dialogue have been resolved.

But difficulties remain. As Ambassador Morjane just said, there is always a temptation to live with the status quo.

In our view, three factors are key to moving the peace process ahead: disengagement and withdrawal; the inter-Congolese dialogue; and expansion of MONUC.

First, on disengagement and withdrawal, MONUC continues to face difficulties in deploying and in carrying out its mission. The disengagement and withdrawal process that would demonstrate real progress in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement has not advanced. The Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD), which is required to withdraw from Kisangani under a Chapter-VII resolution of the Council, resolution 1304 (2000), has not done so. The rebel movement has yet to comply with the demand of the Council. The demilitarization of Kisangani could allow the reconstruction of that ravaged city and provide the necessary rehabilitation of its inhabitants. It could provide a context for initiating the inter-Congolese dialogue. In Equateur province, the Front de libération du Congo (FLC) has yet to demonstrate understanding and cede administration to

the Government as per the Kampala disengagement plan.

Secondly, on the inter-Congolese dialogue, the early commencement of such a dialogue is of crucial importance for engaging the parties in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. We note that the facilitator has had to postpone the preparatory meeting to 20 August, apparently for technical reasons. We hope that arrangements are being made for holding that meeting on the new date. The dialogue must start as soon as possible. It must be open, representative and inclusive. It must be free from any outside interference. It should allow full participation by Congolese civil society.

Thirdly, with respect to the expansion of MONUC, it has long been argued by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and by its allies that the size of MONUC does not correspond to what the situation demands. The Secretary-General, in his last report, said that at that stage he was not asking for an enlargement of MONUC beyond the authorized strength. At a new stage that may occur when the parties have made progress in disengagement and withdrawal, we shall have to consider the expansion of MONUC.

We stress that the Council must make a clear commitment in line with its policy to consider expanding the size of MONUC so that the Mission can carry out the tasks assigned to it as well additional tasks it should assume. There is a practical need for the Council to demonstrate a credible presence, determination and commitment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The parties are perhaps not taking seriously the will and capacity of the United Nations. We have seen in Sierra Leone the difference that a credible United Nations presence can make.

Ambassador Morjane has indicated that MONUC would have to deploy at least two battalions of troops to secure Kisangani following the eventual withdrawal of the RCD. That would not leave enough troops for MONUC to deploy to other parts of the country.

I wonder if the Council can, with due regard to the reality on the ground and with respect for its own relevant resolutions, continue to say that MONUC cannot provide security to civilians. I am referring, of course, to resolutions 1265 (1999) and 1296 (2000). In that connection, we welcome the initiatives of the Secretary-General in following up those resolutions, including through closer cooperation and joint strategic planning between the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as described in his letter dated 16 July 2001 (S/2001/712).

Entry into the third phase should not be delayed. It should not be delayed by Council. It should not be delayed because of a lack of preparedness. We have to put constant pressure on the parties to live up to their commitments. At the same time, as the Security Council, we have to demonstrate our commitment to support full implementation of the Lusaka Agreement.

The Secretary-General, in his seventh report, outlined the needs for a third phase. In his eighth report, he makes reference to that. As we said at our last meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, preparedness is of crucial importance. Let us not be caught by surprise. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is an enormous country, with 16 million people affected by the war; the challenges of peacekeeping and peace-building will be enormous.

Let me conclude by paying a very warm and high tribute to Ambassador Kamel Morjane, who, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, has rendered a tremendous service in support of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and pursued the mandate of the Council with determination and perseverance. He took over his responsibilities in the midst of conflict on all fronts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As he leaves, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is now in a much better situation with a real prospect of peace. We would have wished him to continue, at least until definite progress is made in the implementation of the peace Agreement, but he has to move on. I wish him well in his new assignment with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. We look forward to our future interaction with him and, personally, it will be my pleasure to keep in touch with my friend and brother.

Mr. Kassé (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank you, Sir, for your initiative in convening this public information meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I also wish to welcome the presence among us here today of the Secretary-General and to thank him for his important statement.

Allow me to pay a heartfelt tribute to Ambassador Kamel Morjane, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Thanks to his determination, wisdom and talent as an experienced diplomat, Ambassador Morjane has succeeded in creating what had seemed unthinkable at the outset: a climate of trust and cooperation between the United Nations and the authorities of all those involved in the highly complex conflict in the Congo. We thank Ambassador Morjane very warmly and, through him, the sisterly Republic of Tunisia for its diplomacy. Our best wishes for success in his new duties go to Ambassador Morjane.

Since the beginning of the year, we have considered with cautious optimism the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My delegation remains optimistic and believes that, today more than ever, we need to move forward despite the serious difficulties that we continue to encounter in this process, in particular with regard to disengagement, the demilitarization of Kisangani and disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation. Allow me to address each of these issues.

First, concerning the disengagement of forces, in particular in Equateur Province, we urge the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo to abide by its own commitments and to demonstrate understanding with regard to the civil administration of evacuated localities. Beyond disengagement, however, there is an imperative need for progress towards the total withdrawal of foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and towards disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation. For my delegation, the total withdrawal of foreign forces and disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation must be the primary objectives for establishing lasting and definitive peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Secondly, with respect to the question of the demilitarization of the city of Kisangani — which is required by resolution 1304 (2000), adopted more than a year ago, under Chapter VII of the Charter — the Security Council should plan to take the measures necessary to put an end to that unacceptable and dangerous situation.

Moreover, we ask that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) be strengthened in Kisangani, inter alia, by the despatch of two additional battalions. We would be equally in favour of any proposal designed to make Kisangani, once demilitarized, a symbolic city by allowing it, for example, to host the inter-Congolese dialogue and the headquarters of the Joint Military Commission.

Thirdly, with respect to disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation, we welcome the recent meeting between Presidents Kabila and Kagame on this question. We feel that the encouraging results of that meeting should be supported by the United Nations. In this regard, we note with satisfaction that MONUC is currently working on a comprehensive plan on this issue, which indeed remains a genuine threat to the entire peace process in the region, for without disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation there will be no withdrawal of foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We therefore fully agree that MONUC should play a guiding and lead role in disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation. We must be clear that the parties, despite their political will, can never achieve that alone. The United Nations and the donor community must actively contribute to that end.

I cannot conclude this overview without referring to the issue of the plundering of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has continued despite the Council's presidential statement of 3 May 2001. We note the new membership of the Panel of Experts on that question and await with interest the addendum to the report. In the meantime, we reaffirm our firm condemnation of the ongoing pillage of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which, according to credible sources, is the principal reason for the continuation of the conflict and for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

If we have refrained today from placing the inter-Congolese dialogue among the current difficulties, it is simply because we consider the report of the 9 July meeting to be of a purely technical nature. We nevertheless reiterate our urgent appeal to all of the parties to do their utmost to ensure that the meeting of 20 August is a true success in order to permit the

launching of the inter-Congolese dialogue, which remains the other key to the settlement.

In conclusion, I have to say that we must prepare, here and now and without procrastination, for the third phase of the expansion of MONUC, which has been urgently requested by the Political Committee of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. In this regard, as recalled by the Ambassador of Bangladesh, we all witnessed the difference that was made by the expansion of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone on that ground in that country.

Finally, I recall once again that any peace process must be accompanied by economic assistance. In that context, we welcome the launching of the economic dimension of MONUC with the resumption of navigation on the Congo River. We reiterate the appeal made to the donor community for local projects of rapid impact to be established so as to improve the daily lives of thousands of Congolese, who have suffered too much the pains of a war that, after all, is not their own.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for convening this open meeting with Ambassador Kamel Morjane, allowing him to inform all delegations about the work being undertaken by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). I also note the participation and presence of the Secretary-General and the appeal he made in his opening statement.

We thank Ambassador Morjane for his extensive and, as always, lucid briefing and wish him great success in his new post, in which he will be able to continue providing valuable services to the peoples of Africa and other continents.

Establishing peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is the primary task of the Congolese people themselves. It is they who must restore coexistence among themselves and with their neighbours. Nevertheless, the countries of the region have called for the presence of the United Nations to help them overcome the deep difficulties and interests that separate them. This task falls primarily to MONUC.

The presence of Kamel Morjane in the field has been a positive factor in the success of the Mission. However, the most difficult decisions for us in the Council have, perhaps, yet to come, in particular in facing the dilemmas of the third phase of deployment. Following the cessation of hostilities and the separation of forces, the conflict seems to have focused its destructive capacities and greatest dangers to the population on the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Thus, having listened to the statement of the head of the United Nations Mission at this meeting, I wish to refer to four aspects that, as we all know, are of special relevance.

First of all, concerning the demilitarization of Kisangani, it is true that the phase of the separation of forces, which began in April, must be concluded as soon as possible. We insist, as other delegations have done in different circumstances, on the complete demilitarization of the city of Kisangani and its environs. This is a commitment that the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) has shown it is willing to fulfil, and we hope that it does so without further delay. It is also a measure that will greatly contribute to alleviating the suffering of the population in the area and to restoring trust. We hope that this city will become a symbol of peace, located, as it is, in the heart of the country, and, if the Congolese themselves so decide, that it can be the seat of the national dialogue, the first preparatory meeting for which will take place on 20 August in the capital of Botswana.

The second item that I would like to mention is that of navigation on the Congo River. My delegation would like to highlight the presence of MONUC all along the Congo River. We welcome the safe arrival in Kisangani of the Uruguayan river unit, which has given rise to the expectation, after three years of intense war, that civil navigation along the river can be re-established and the economy of the riparian populations reactivated. The operation "peace boat", which is soon to set out from Kinshasa, will provide food and supplies to many people who live along the banks of the river and will provide important support for the humanitarian actions in the area. In this connection, we would like to ask Ambassador Morjane about the progress in the initiative to set up a commission for the administration of the Congo River basin, made up of representatives of parties to the conflict, the United Nations agencies in the field and neighbouring countries that will use this waterway.

The third aspect is the activity of the irregular forces in the east. Here we would like to draw attention to and condemn the serious violations of human rights

and international humanitarian law that have taken place persistently and with impunity in the eastern provinces of the Congo. We have been thus informed, for example, in a recent and very useful meeting under the Arria formula. The authorities of Kinshasa and the countries associated with the conflict must refrain from providing support, training and shelter to the irregular forces that operate in this region, including the Mayi-Mayi militias, and must provide MONUC with the information that they possess on their number and location. This is the procedure that was agreed upon to begin a reliable process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration resettlement or repatriation of the so-called negative forces. Negligence or delay in responding to these concerns must be considered a serious obstacle on the road to peace. We would like Ambassador Morjane to describe the level of cooperation that the Mission has received in this respect.

Fourthly, as for the humanitarian situation, my delegation would like to respond to the concern that prevails among humanitarian organizations as a result of the current situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We would like to add our voice to the urgent call of the donors that was made in Geneva on 13 July by the heads of the four most important humanitarian assistance agencies of the United Nations system: the Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme (WFP). Stable and adequate contributions and ease of access to the populations in need are the two most urgent elements at the present time. We praise with great appreciation and admiration the relief workers who, even in the very hostile environment that prevails in many provinces of the Congo, persevere in their humanitarian efforts. We cannot abandon them at this time.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): We, too, are particularly pleased to welcome the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Kamel Morjane, to the Council today. We join our colleagues in paying tribute to Ambassador Morjane's unstinting and courageous work and his outstanding leadership over the past 20 months. When Ambassador Morjane commenced his work, we could not easily have anticipated that we would have reached the current stage of guarded optimism. We wish him every success in his new challenge.

We welcome the presence here today of Secretary-General Annan, who has invested so much in promoting peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo, including most recently, and directly, with some of the principal players in the process — the heads of State of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and Rwanda. As mentioned by Ambassador Levitte, Belgium, as Presidency of the European Union, will make a statement later in today's debate. Ireland subscribes fully to the position of the European Union, and I make the following points in my national capacity.

While recent events had given grounds for a measure of optimism, the military situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo has not yet reached the positive point of no return. It is clear that on a number of fronts there has been tangible progress. However, the potential for a relapse into violence remains. In the period ahead we must continue, as a Council, to maintain the clear signal to all the parties of our determination to protect, to sustain and to develop further the achievements that have been secured thus far.

That said, it remains the case that the future security and prosperity of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the wider region rest with the signatories of the Lusaka Agreement. Only they have the central capacity to implement the Agreement.

When the Council mission returned from the Great Lakes region two months ago there was reasonable optimism that the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo was moving in the right direction. That is still the case, but there is some concern at the slow pace and uneven nature of that progress. Quite frankly, more needs to be done, and forward movement maintained.

In particular, the parties must meet their obligation to bring forward and implement plans for the orderly withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Congo. Support for the activities of armed groups must be brought to an end. The Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma) must comply with the Security Council's demand for the demilitarization of Kisangani. All Congolese forces, including the Forces armées congolaises must be deployed within accepted disengagement lines.

The parties must take the necessary steps to enable the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration

and repatriation or resettlement of armed groups, with the assistance of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the international community. The parties must ensure respect for human rights and uphold the provisions of international humanitarian law. Every assistance must be given to Sir Ketumile Masire and his team in their efforts to launch the inter-Congolese dialogue. It is crucial that this process should not be allowed to falter and that there should be no further delay in the holding of preparatory consultations.

If the goodwill and commitment of the parties is forthcoming the Council, MONUC and the wider international community are, of course, ready to assist. Ireland has put on record in the Council our desire to see a joined-up approach in the United Nations, at Headquarters and in the field, and our belief that an entry point for the development dimension must be ensured at all levels.

In that regard, it is disappointing that obstacles have been put in the way of the United Nations efforts to nominate the Humanitarian Coordinator. We welcome the activity of MONUC in implementing quick-impact projects, which assist the peace process by helping address the basic needs of the people. It is hoped that such activity can pave the way for larger developmental activity that can take place in conditions of peace, with the support of foreign investment.

The revival of Congolese national life will require tolerance and reconciliation. But justice, too, will be required. As mentioned earlier by the Secretary-General, members of the Council had the opportunity last week to hear from members of non-governmental organizations, who related to us their experiences of what they have witnessed on the ground. What they told us confirmed what we have been hearing for a long time. And yet, such is the extent of the humanitarian suffering in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that what they told us what deeply shocking. It is not enough for the various armed forces to observe the demands to cease military activity. They must also respect international humanitarian standards and allow safe, unhindered and unconditional access by humanitarian agencies to those in need. This message must be sent in the strongest terms to armed groups themselves and their sponsors. Those that have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity must be held accountable for their wrongs.

In closing, let me pay tribute to the excellent work carried out under Ambassador Morjane, by the staff of MONUC and by the United Nations agencies on the ground. I said earlier that 20 months ago, when Ambassador Morjane took up his post, we could not have easily anticipated that we would reach the current stage of guarded optimism. We must not allow the impetus that has been built up to dissipate. We will continue to work together with a strong sense of purpose, but also of urgency to carry out this work.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open briefing on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an issue to which we attach great importance. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his presence today and for his intervention. I also thank Ambassador Kamel Morjane, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his comprehensive briefing. We join previous speakers in paying tribute to him, and we commend him for the excellent work he has accomplished as head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

We note that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has generally remained calm and that the Ceasefire Agreement continues to be respected. There is overall progress in the implementation of the plans and sub-plans for disengagement and redeployment. All of these positive developments are encouraging signs that the parties to the conflict are determined to take the peace process forward. However, we should not be complacent, because the peace process is still fragile and can easily and abruptly turn around, with tremendous consequences.

The contribution that the inter-Congolese dialogue will make in bringing peace to the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot be undermined. We attach particular importance to the success of this dialogue. We commend former President Masire, the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, for his efforts to convene the preparatory meeting. We stress the need to ensure that the preparatory meeting scheduled for 20 August takes place without hindrance. Indeed, we are receiving reports that the democratic spirit among the ordinary Congolese is very much alive and that both the Congolese and the facilitator are on

the right path for peace. We must take advantage of this positive development. We call on all the parties to participate in the dialogue, which can be successful only with the full and free participation of civil society.

However, we are concerned about reports of an upsurge of violence in the two Kivus over the last few weeks. We make a strong appeal to all the parties concerned to refrain from acts of violence and to honour their commitment under the Lusaka Agreement, which remains the most viable solution to the conflict. Likewise, the eastward movement of armed rebel groups and the alleged incursions of negative forces into Rwanda and Burundi are disturbing elements. These events are clear indications that we can no longer delay the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement (DDRRR) process. At the same time, we believe that in order to address the regional dimension of the conflict, it would be important to facilitate many bilateral and multilateral meetings among all the parties concerned. In this context, we welcome the recent meeting between President Kagame and President Kabila in the presence of the Secretary-General, on the margins of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit in Lusaka, as well as the meeting President Kabila held with President Museveni. Such bilateral meetings can go a long way towards confidence-building.

The continued reluctance of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) to demilitarize Kisangani, in spite of repeated calls by the Security Council, cannot be tolerated. It is also totally unacceptable that the personnel of MONUC should face obstructions and harassment by RCD elements in the performance of their work. We strongly condemn such uncooperative attitudes, and we appeal to all those concerned to allow MONUC to carry out its mandate without any hindrance.

MONUC, under the guidance of Ambassador Morjane, is doing a commendable job and has had a positive impact on the peace process. It is now known that the mere presence or even the announcement of the arrival of MONUC in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo is a compelling force that the Congolese people respond to with great hope and enthusiasm. This is the time when the inter-Congolese dialogue needs to make every effort to accompany the Congolese people in their struggle for peace and stability.

We consider the present size of MONUC to be inadequate given the task that lies ahead. We also note that MONUC is not yet fully deployed at the level authorized by resolution 1291 (2000). No hesitation on our part to make the extra effort should be allowed to compromise the peace process in any manner. We wish to emphasize the call made recently by the OAU Summit in Lusaka, appealing to the Security Council, when designing and planning the third phase of the deployment of MONUC, to take into account the need to guarantee the stability and security of the Democratic Republic of the Congo after the withdrawal of foreign troops.

We deplore the fact that full operational information on the actual positions of parties signatories to the Lusaka Agreement have not yet been provided to MONUC. We call upon the parties concerned to convey these details without any further delay for verification by MONUC, so that the next phase of DDRRR can be planned accordingly.

The DDRRR programme alone will not be able to resolve the problem of violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The programme needs to be accompanied by proper economic assistance in order to have sustainable peace and development. In fact, we should already start thinking about the post-conflict stage, when a comprehensive programme of action should be undertaken to address the various problems of the country, in particular the issue of the rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers. In this respect, we make an appeal to the international donor community, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to assist the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in its economic recovery. We also look forward to the recommendations of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of the Natural Resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Panel is expected to deliver an addendum to its first report. Meanwhile, we reiterate that the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo belong to the people of that country alone, and we condemn all illegal exploitation.

The humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region remains another area of serious concern. While we appeal to the international community to assist in ameliorating the situation, we also call on all parties to guarantee humanitarian agencies secure and unimpeded access.

Before concluding, my delegation wishes once again to commend Ambassador Morjane for the excellent work he has done in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He carried his work out with full dedication over the last 20 months. We wish him every the success in his new assignment.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): It is no secret that the file on the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the more difficult files the Security Council has to deal with. Indeed, if we had received more bad news than good news today, we would not have been surprised. However, as Ambassador Morjane said earlier this morning, the prospects for peace have never been as good as they are today. Of course, we need to find out the reasons for this. The reasons are complex, but one of the reasons is clearly evident before us in the form of Ambassador Kamel Morjane.

There is of course an age-old debate about whether history is moved by larger forces or by the actions of individuals. Certainly, the answer is a combination of both. But in some cases, the contributions of individuals do matter, and certainly so in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There is no doubt that Ambassador Kamel Morjane has made a huge difference personally.

In this regard, I want to mention that in addition to the legendary diplomatic skills that he has, which most Tunisian diplomats seem to have — I think it is part of the genetic code of being a Tunisian — what we found quite remarkable when we visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo was the tremendous managerial skills that Ambassador Morjane showed in the management of the huge and complex operation in the Congo. We could certainly see with our own eyes that the sheer presence of United Nations personnel made a huge difference in the chemistry of the region. All this was carefully and well done by Ambassador Morjane and his staff. We are glad that we are here to join in the tribute being paid to him.

But also, as many speakers have noted, the peace process remains fragile and reversible. In trying to find an appropriate analogy for where we stand in the peace process of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we thought perhaps it could be compared to a cracked boulder being pushed uphill with great effort and which still remains far from the peak. The real danger exists of this cracked boulder sliding back downhill.

Given the situation, we see three main challenges. The first challenge is to prevent any backsliding in the peace process. A second challenge is to demonstrate that we have the will and the resources for the long slog uphill. The third, and the more difficult long-term challenge, is to see what we do when we discover at the top a huge plateau where we need to build a durable peace in the Congo and in the region.

To be completely honest, our answers on how to deal with these challenges, unfortunately, will not be new. We will probably repeat points we have made before, and indeed probably repeat points that have actually been made earlier in the discussion this morning. Perhaps some day when the Security Council goes truly high-tech and we have in front of us a screen that prints out the text of what every speaker is saying, we can probably have a button to indicate that we agree with the points being made, and that might save us a lot of time in this debate. But in the absence of this high-tech equipment, we will try to put across our points in brief, summary form.

As we said, the first challenge is to prevent the peace process from sliding backwards. How do we do it? First, clearly the Council must continue to keep the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo under close review. In this regard, we want to say that today's debate is actually a useful contribution. From time to time we wonder whether these open debates have any impact on the situation, but for a delicate problem like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it does help to put the spotlight on the issue from time to time, and so here, Mr. President, we commend you for organizing this debate at this time.

Secondly, of course, the relations between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours must continue to improve. I think that we are also pleased to learn that there was a good meeting between the Presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, and we are also pleased that the Secretary-General, as several other speakers have commented earlier, made a valuable contribution in helping arrange good meetings on these issues.

Thirdly, clearly — and this is a point that several speakers have highlighted — Kisangani and its environs must be demilitarized completely and without further delay. It is unfortunate that the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) continues to

maintain several thousand troops in the vicinity. This is in direct violation of resolution 1304 (2000), adopted by the Council more than a year ago. Clearly, this is unacceptable. If you want to judge in terms of whether we are moving forward or backward, clearly Kisangani holds important symbolic significance, and we must show that we are moving forward in that area.

Fourthly, we must also show that all the parties have a clear understanding of the division of responsibilities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As several speakers again have noted that MONUC's mandate does not permit it to assume responsibility for the safety of civilians, clearly the Congolese parties must realize that they are responsible for the maintenance of law and order and for the safety and security of civilians under their de facto control.

The second challenge, as you said, Mr. President, is to show that we have a commitment to keep going uphill. In this regard, it is useful to bear in mind that in any peace process there are essentially two parts. Part one is the role and the contribution of the parties on the ground — the Congolese parties, the neighbours, and so forth. Part two is the role and the contribution of the international community at large. Both parts have to work together to ensure that the process of the Democratic Republic of the Congo works well. Frankly, our actions both in the Council and elsewhere, can send valuable signals. I was going to say, for example, even though the Secretary-General has now left, that his personal presence for much of this debate I think sent a very important signal of the importance of this issue.

Similarly, we are pleased to learn that during Belgium's Presidency of the European Union for the next six months, greater priority will be given to the issue of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Of course, the decision that we take on when we will move to phase III will itself be a very important signal of our commitment to the process. Here, of course, we would like to support the point made by the Ambassador of Bangladesh. We would say that one way of expediting the move to phase III is for the parties concerned to also show a greater commitment to the process; and certainly, as the Ambassador of Mauritius highlighted, we have to show greater commitment to what is called the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement or repatriation (DDRRR). In that sense, the international community and the parties can work together.

Finally, the last challenge is to ensure that we build long-term peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Again, let me confess that we have no new ideas to suggest for this long-term peace, but we would like to endorse at least three ideas put across in this debate so far.

The first is, of course, the importance of the inter-Congolese dialogue. Everyone has stressed it. We support it. Certainly, we commend President Masire for his efforts; but as President Masire told us when he met the Security Council mission, he hopes that the international community will show its commitment to the inter-Congolese dialogue by also showing that it will come forth with resources to help the operation.

Secondly, clearly we need to continue to pay attention to the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Panel has done some good work. We hope, when the final report comes out, that we will pay even greater attention to the issue.

Thirdly, we think that preparations should also begin soon for a conference on the Great Lakes to push the peace process forward and to try to suggest long-term solutions to all the interrelated crises in the region. In this regard, we wonder whether the time may have come to also send to the Great Lakes an inter-agency mission similar to the one we dispatched to West Africa under Assistant Secretary-General Ibrahima Fall. Here we would, of course, defer to the judgement of the Secretariat on this. But we do believe a coordinated approach involving the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region is important for ensuring the long-term peace of the region.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We associate ourselves with the words of gratitude addressed to the Secretary-General and to his Special Representative for their important statements.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo evokes mixed feelings on our part. Unquestionably, it is gratifying that the parties are continuing to comply with the ceasefire regime. Progress is evident in the implementation of plans for the disengagement of the opposing forces. Some of the foreign forces have left the Democratic Republic of the

Congo. Preparations are under way for the beginning of the inter-Congolese dialogue.

Of course, not everything is as smooth as we would like. In particular, we are concerned about delays in the withdrawal to agreed positions of the forces of the Mouvement pour la libération du Congo (MLC) in Equateur Province and the unacceptable attempts by the leadership of that movement to condition the implementation of the plan for the disengagement of forces on political demands. But, I reiterate, on the whole we are satisfied with the course of the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, which, in our view, has acquired a definite positive dynamic. We place particular hope here on the dialogue that has begun between the leaders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighbouring States on the problem of ensuring mutual security. We support this process and wish it every success.

It is specifically with this process that we link the prospects for a solution to the problems of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement or repatriation of members of armed groups, whose actions are increasingly becoming a serious destabilizing factor and thereby jeopardizing the ceasefire.

While Russia is in favour of the strictest compliance by all parties to the Lusaka Agreement with the demand for the cessation of support for armed groups, it emphasizes the need for all issues within the framework of the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement or repatriation to be resolved solely on a voluntary basis. Within the framework of the existing mandate and to the extent of its ability, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) will assist in this process.

Russia also supports the holding of consultations with the leadership of international monetary and financial institutions, with a view to securing funds for the resolution of questions linked to disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We believe that, in the long term, success in this area directly depends on the easing of ethnic tensions and on the democratization of political life in all countries of the Great Lakes region.

I should now like to comment on the issue of greatest concern to us in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. More than a year after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1304 (2000), containing a demand for the demilitarization of the city of Kisangani — which was then reaffirmed in Security Council resolution 1355 (2001) — the leadership of the Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) is stubbornly refusing to implement it. Moreover, the leaders of the RCD have chosen a course of active resistance to the implementation by MONUC of its mandate in that city, which, due to a number of factors, is of key significance to the entire peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In our view, this situation is absolutely unacceptable. It represents an open challenge to the Security Council and to the entire international community. We believe that the situation has reached a point at which the Security Council, in accordance with the provisions of the resolutions previously adopted, must consider additional measures in order to ensure the demilitarization of the city of Kisangani. We believe that the first step in this direction could be a ban on the issuance by Member States of entry visas to the leadership of the RCD. Russia is ready to discuss other measures as well.

While reaffirming our support for MONUC and our readiness to consider, in a constructive manner, the recommendations of the Secretary-General for its further development, we would like once again to emphasize that, for us, the decisive factor in this issue is the consistent demonstration by the parties to the conflict themselves of political will for its peaceful settlement. We call on them to carry out in good faith their obligations under the Lusaka Agreement and subsequent agreements and in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

In conclusion, allow me to express our gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Morjane, who is leaving his post, for his outstanding contribution to the cause of a settlement of the conflict in the Congo. Under his leadership, a breakthrough has been achieved in the quest for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the logic of the search for agreement has replaced the logic of war. Although he is leaving his post at a time when his efforts are only just beginning to bear fruit, we have no doubt that his successor and his colleagues in MONUC will successfully conclude the work he has begun. Allow

me, on behalf of the Russian delegation, to wish him great success in his future work.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I, too, wish to second the warm comments made by my colleagues around the table about Ambassador Morjane. I will not repeat them, but I do want to pay tribute to the outstanding work of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) under his leadership, which has helped the Democratic Republic of the Congo find a chance for peace. He has my country's gratitude and appreciation for his service and best wishes for his future.

My Government fully subscribes to the presidential statement that will be issued at the conclusion of today's meeting, but, as we look to the future, we also thought it would be useful to review briefly the key issues that are still before us in the peace process.

The demilitarization of Kisangani is a demand of the Security Council, as others have noted, and the Council expects this to be accomplished. We do not accept the argument of the RCD-Goma that the military presence is necessary to secure the human rights of citizens there. Moreover, we have serious concerns about the RCD-Goma's own human rights record in the areas under its control.

Under the disengagement sub-plans, the RCD-Goma would maintain administrative control of Kisangani pending the establishment of new national institutions. We understand and accept that a demilitarized Kisangani would require a strengthened MONUC contingent, and we continue to subscribe to the conclusions and recommendations of the Security Council mission in this regard.

While MONUC cannot assume the burden of administering Kisangani, it can work with local authorities to provide support and assistance. The first step is an RCD-Goma acceptance of the principle of a demilitarized Kisangani. Once that is forthcoming, we will look to the Political Committee and the Joint Military Commission (JMC), in consultation with MONUC, for ideas on the nature of civilian administration in the area.

For all the talk of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement or repatriation of the former Rwandan Army forces (ex-FAR), Interahamwe and other negative forces, there has not been enough progress. We note recent reports that some members of those groups have been brought into camps within the territory under the control of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we hope that MONUC will act quickly on the Government's offer to allow visits to those sites.

I wish also to underscore the importance of including representatives from United Nations humanitarian agencies to ensure the proper focus on reintegration and resettlement issues.

But the first step of a disarmament process is the cessation of arming, something that, unfortunately, has yet to materialize. As long as negative forces such as the ex-FAR, Interahamwe and the Mayi-Mayi are being armed by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and some of its allies, there will be no disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement, and, we believe, no solution to the Great Lakes crisis. We therefore call on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo immediately to cease support, be it through arms, training, money or other forms of assistance, to all such forces.

We are pleased to note that regional leaders, including Presidents Kabila and Kagame, whom we view as the critical players on this issue, continue to meet. It should be obvious to all that the Governments of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have common security interests that can also be addressed through a policy of cooperation and dialogue.

The lack of progress on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement is one of the reasons we have not seen broader progress on peace in the region. The remedy is not for the United Nations to assume a greater role; the remedy is for the parties to recognize their common interests and to make this a reality.

As in all other areas of the peace process, the role of the United Nations in disarmament and reintegration will expand or contract in direct proportion to the quality of political will displayed by the parties. If the United Nations is to assist the parties in this area, the JMC must produce a credible plan that reflects an unambiguous regional commitment to address the issue. This should be done immediately.

We are troubled at the failure of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to accept the appointment of the new United Nations humanitarian coordinator. The individual nominated by the Secretariat is an outstanding candidate, and we urge the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to revise its position. The lack of a humanitarian coordinator makes it even harder to raise the money needed to meet the humanitarian needs of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the appointment will facilitate a more effective response to the growing humanitarian crisis.

In that connection, I also want to emphasize the need for the relevant parties to carry through with their investigation of the murder of six personnel of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and to bring the guilty to justice.

The exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to benefit warlords, arms producers and corrupt officials. Clearly, that practice must halt. The natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the patrimony of the Congolese nation, and we are concerned when those resources are not used to advance the welfare of the Congolese people. We are glad to see that the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has resumed work on this important issue, and we look forward to the addendum to its original report.

For there to be peace in the region, three things, at a minimum, must happen: all foreign forces must withdraw from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the inter-Congolese dialogue must begin the process of giving the Congolese people their first accountable Government; and the long-standing practice of regional governments entering into alliances with non-State actors must end. Good governance, democratic accountability and security are fundamental requirements for regional peace. If a Great Lakes conference dedicated to those issues can advance those goals, then perhaps the time has come to take that long-standing proposal off the back burner and see if it can help improve the lives of the people of the region.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): My delegation too would like to join in the tributes paid to Ambassador Kamel Morjane; I wish him well in his important new post.

My delegation welcomes this open briefing, as it is an opportune occasion to take stock at a crucial moment in the peace process and to hear the views of other Members of the United Nations. The challenges we face in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are enormous and complex, and they continue to pose a threat to regional stability. In our view, that makes it all the more important for the Security Council to seek broad guidance and support for its continued handling of the situation.

We all agree that the only viable solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is through a political settlement. The continuation of warfare will only cause even deeper wounds on a population already heavily marked by the crisis and will drive the country further into chaos and devastation. Although we have recently seen some positive signs in terms of implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, we remain concerned about the slow speed with which the parties are honouring key committments, as well as about the appalling humanitarian situation in the country.

While we welcome the progress that has been made so far in the disengagement of forces, we remain deeply concerned at reports indicating that the demilitarization process is behind schedule and that Government as well as rebel troops are still holding positions which according to the Agreement should have been abandoned. That is unacceptable, and it threatens to undermine the entire peace process. In that regard we appeal in particular to the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) to take swift action to withdraw its troops and in that way to contribute to the full demilitarization of Kisangani.

Moreover, the full withdrawal of all foreign troops from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo also needs to be addressed without further delay. In that context we urge all parties to contribute fully to the preparation and implementation of the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement. Appropriate measures in that regard constitute fundamental criteria for a lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region as a whole. For that reason, resolution 1355 (2001) authorized the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to assist the parties in carrying out the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement. However,

for MONUC to play a role here, the parties need to express their readiness to go ahead. We regret to note that such communications are in many cases overdue, and we therefore call on the parties to take swift action in that regard.

In the wake of the disengagement process there is a real danger that unarmed civilians, particularly in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, will fall victim to reprisals owing to their ethnic background or political affiliation. Also, among the armed groups to be demobilized there are large numbers of children who, following the demobilization process, will be particularly vulnerable. Norway therefore supports the call for the rapid deployment of human rights and child-protection officers as a means to address the plight of civilians and thereby contribute to the smooth implementation of the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement.

The sustainability of the peace process depends heavily on the involvement and commitment by the various actors within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The international community can contribute by means of peacekeeping and peace-building measures, but the road towards lasting peace must be paved by the Congolese themselves. The inter-Congolese dialogue constitutes a cornerstone in this process, as it clearly has the potential to reunite various groups and factions in the effort to restore peace, security and respect for human rights. We therefore join others in calling on all Congolese parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement to cooperate fully with Sir Ketumile Masire in his continued efforts to move the process forward.

The success of the dialogue will be very much dependent on its accessibility and transparency. Full freedom to express opinions and beliefs is an absolute prerequisite in that regard. Recent reports of detention and intimidation of human rights defenders and civil society actors associated with the inter-Congolese dialogue are therefore troubling signs. This is unacceptable and is counterproductive to the peace agenda. We therefore call on the parties to refrain from preventing any group or individual from participating in the dialogue. We also urge the donor community to provide the necessary financial support to facilitate the different initiatives under the auspices of the dialogue.

As we make strong efforts to address the various technicalities of the peace agreement and the level to which the parties have honoured their commitments, it is easy to forget that, in this as in any other devastating conflict, it is the civilian population that pays the real costs. Recent reports relating to the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are indeed shocking and disturbing. According to humanitarian agencies, more than 1 million internally displaced persons in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are currently receiving no humanitarian assistance whatsoever. As members of the international community, we therefore need to continue and step up efforts aimed at meeting the desperate humanitarian needs. In that regard, we also reiterate our call to all parties concerned to immediately facilitate the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian agencies.

Another topic which requires urgent consideration in this context is the impunity prevailing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There can be no lasting peace without justice and accountability for the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that occurred from the outset of the conflict. A failure to address that issue could seriously hinder reconciliation and could lead to further atrocities and conflict. An accurate, impartial and thorough investigation of the facts is needed. Secondly, appropriate and effective mechanisms to bring the alleged perpetrators to justice need to be considered.

Finally, let me reiterate Norway's full support for the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation wishes to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting on the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We also wish to express our appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), Ambassador Kamel Morjane, for his comprehensive briefing. Today's meeting allows the Council an opportunity to review developments since the establishment of MONUC.

A year ago, we were not as hopeful as we are today. Indeed, the prospects for peace were dim. The dynamics which have resulted from certain seminal events, including the successive meetings of the Security Council with the Political Committee — culminating in the recent visit by the Security Council

mission to the region — have all contributed to opening the window of opportunity that now prevails in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, as Ambassador Morjane has pointed out, we are not yet past the point of no return. The peace process remains fragile and it is now up to the parties themselves to take advantage of the opportunity presented to act decisively and to bring lasting peace to the region.

My delegation is cognizant of the regional dimension to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of the need for regional solutions. We appreciate the need to satisfy the security concerns of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of all the countries in the region. The recent Security Council mission to the region sharpened the focus of the parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement on their respective responsibilities. The need for increased dialogue between the leaders of the States of the region was highlighted and we have already seen a significant increase in the dialogue, which is having a positive impact on the peace process.

The role of the Joint Military Commission (JMC) has also taken on increased importance. Co-location of the JMC with MONUC is necessary in order to further develop and coordinate the withdrawal plans of all foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We believe that it is essential if the third phase of the deployment of MONUC is to be realized and if MONUC is to be enabled to carry out its assigned mandate.

The disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement programme is perhaps the most important issue with respect to the region's security. It is one of the major challenges facing the Lusaka peace process and an effective strategy to deal with the so-called negative forces. In light of this, the recent invitation extended by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to carry out an assessment of the requirements for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of the 3,000-plus members of the so-called negative forces, now in the two camps, should be accepted. This assessment could lead to the implementation of an effective disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement programme, with the assistance of the international community. Success with this group would be a catalyst for others to voluntarily join the programme.

My delegation supports the enhancement of MONUC's role to facilitate this process. Future political developments in Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda will significantly affect the future of the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement programme. Those three countries have important roles in ensuring the success of such a programme.

The Security Council, in resolution 1341 (2001) of 22 February 2001, urged all parties to the conflict to cooperate with MONUC in preparing and implementing the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement plans. Unfortunately, there are a number of recent, ominous reports that are very troubling. Not the least of these suggests that support for the armed groups, rather than being phased out, has intensified in recent weeks. It would appear that the sponsors of these groups are facilitating a build-up of these forces that would prolong their control of the territories they now occupy. Equally troubling is a report that suggests that they are supporting the forced recruitment of civilians, including children, for the military forces of the armed groups. This is absolutely deplorable and must be brought to an end immediately. In this regard, my delegation would like to hear from Mr. Morjane as to whether there has been any discernible compliance with resolution 1341 (2001).

Another factor affecting the peace process is the lack of freedom of movement. In this regard, we believe that the Congo and Ubangi Rivers must be opened to commercial traffic without further delay. This will require the full cooperation of the parties in control of the regions through which the rivers pass. The economic benefits are obvious to everyone, but it is also important to confidence-building and reconciliation among the protagonists.

Also of concern to my delegation are the reports of gross human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law throughout many areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in the eastern region. What is even more disturbing is that the perpetrators of these abuses show scant regard for the humanitarian needs of the civilians in areas under their control. Furthermore, the level of insecurity severely restricts the delivery of aid to relieve the suffering of the population in these areas. These abuses cannot go unpunished and the perpetrators must

understand that the international community is determined to put an end to impunity.

There are also reports from the region which indicate that illegal exploitation of the resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has continued unabated and, in some areas, has actually increased. We emphasize the need for all parties to cooperate fully with the Panel of Experts. The Council must send a message that it is prepared to consider actions necessary to put an end to this exploitation. In this regard, we welcome the decision of the Government of Uganda to establish an inquiry into the conduct of its military and civilians in the illegal exploitation of these resources. It is important that this inquiry be carried out with utmost transparency.

My delegation wishes to recall that the Security Council demanded, in resolution 1304 (2000), that Kisangani be completely demilitarized. To a large extent, the success or failure of the peace process could rest on the demilitarization of Kisangani. We therefore call on the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) in Goma to act in compliance with Security Council resolutions and we call on the supporters of the RCD-Goma to use their influence to bring about the demilitarization of Kisangani and full cooperation with MONUC and the Lusaka peace process.

As we have in the past, my delegation expresses our full support for the inter-Congolese dialogue under the facilitation of Sir Ketumile Masire. While we recognize the need for reconciliation at the level of the signatories to the Lusaka Agreement, it must also be recognized that members of civil society, particularly women, have an important role in the process. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) aptly reaffirms the importance of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building. It also stresses the importance of measures that support women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of peace agreements.

We believe that lessons can be learned from experiences in other conflict-torn regions in which women have taken the lead in conflict resolution and reconciliation. One concrete success has been the holding of peace tables and we believe that one could be held, perhaps in Kisangani, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women. This could serve not only as an example, but also as a confidence-building measure.

As my delegation has indicated in the past and again today, we believe that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot be resolved without taking into consideration the security of its neighbours, particularly those to the East. We have also stated that, for there to be any prospect for long-term sustainable peace, an international conference on the Great Lakes region to address issues of long-term regional security, economic and development issues and regional political cooperation must be held. We believe that preparations for such a conference should begin now, and in this regard, we would support the view expressed by the Permanent Representative of Singapore, who suggested that an interdisciplinary mission could be mounted by the Secretariat in preparation for such a conference.

We in the Council must speak up for the voiceless and defend the powerless. We must continue to take action to further the process of peace. We must be firm when firmness is required. We must command respect for and compliance with our decisions. We have done much, but we can and should do more for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We speak of the window of opportunity for peace, but if the parties fail to act now and take full advantage of it, the window could be slammed shut. They must seize the time and act now and give peace a chance.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the indefatigable efforts and the diplomatic skills of Ambassador Kamel Morjane. He has set an example for us in the international community of an international civil servant who has worked hard in the cause of peace. We wish him all the best, and we commend him, the staff of MONUC, General Diallo and the military personnel for all the efforts that they have brought to this process.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): My delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for his important statement this morning. We would also like to welcome his Special Representative, Ambassador Morjane, as he takes part in this meeting of the Security Council, and to thank him for the detailed briefing on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

That briefing shows that some positive steps have been taken recently by the parties to enhance the inter-Congolese dialogue. However the peace process, in general, remains fragile. That is why we once again urge all the parties to the conflict to preserve the current conditions conducive to the establishment of peace, which have been created through painstaking efforts, and to take practical steps to ensure cooperation with the United Nations presence in the country.

We maintain that only full implementation of the parties' commitments would make for dynamic developments in the peace process, because it rests with the parties to move the process forward. As for the Security Council, it stands ready to continue rendering its full assistance to the parties in their efforts.

The delays in finalizing the disengagement and redeployment of forces plans are of great concern for my delegation. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all armed groups in the Congo are key and must be implemented effectively and without delay. It is urgent to deprive the negative forces of the support that they still have. We believe that it is extremely important to boost this process and to make sure it engages the forces that continue to operate in the eastern part of the country.

The demilitarization of Kisangani is a key issue, too. We believe it is absolutely unacceptable that the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma) forces still remain in this city a year after resolution 1304 (2000) was adopted.

Now that the inter-Congolese dialogue is about to start, the Congolese groups must unconditionally relinquish their military options, join in a political dialogue and, together with political parties and civil society, assist in developing constitutional frameworks for democratic rule in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The efforts by the international community to promote the economic, social and humanitarian revival of the country are to become integral elements of the conflict settlement strategy. We take note with appreciation of the donor countries' willingness to support the efforts of the Congolese Government at this critical juncture.

To conclude, I would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Morjane for his tremendous efforts in promoting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and commend him for his highly skilful management of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the last 20 months, in conditions that have been difficult in many respects. On behalf of the Ukrainian delegation, I wish him every success in his new assignment.

Mr. Harrison (United Kingdom): The representative of Belgium will shortly speak on behalf of the European Union, and my delegation fully endorses what he will say. As he will describe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the wider region of the Great Lakes are very high up on the Union's agenda at the moment.

I should like to thank Special Representative Morjane for his briefing, which was, as ever, very clear, very helpful, very well informed and very well judged. My delegation would like to join others in paying a warm tribute to Ambassador Morjane for the constant and vigorous effort that he has put in throughout his time as the Secretary-General's Special Representative and for the way in which he has driven the peace process forward, often in very difficult conditions. This year, in particular, we are starting to see some real movement, and it is a great tribute to Ambassador Morjane that that is happening. My delegation also wishes him well in the important new duties that he is taking up. From both a professional and personal point of view, we hope that they will bring him back to New York from time to time.

As Ambassador Levitte has said, there is now a window of opportunity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The disengagement process is now broadly complete. There have been various sticking points along the way, and some still remain. The Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie has still not demilitarized Kisangani, despite the demands in previous Security Council resolutions. It is also clear that some Forces armées congolaises troops remain beyond positions agreed in the Harare sub-plans.

Such issues must be resolved without delay. The prize of a demilitarized Kisangani would be a very valuable one. This Council has kept a close watch on progress made so far, and has been prepared to speak up firmly when any of the parties has failed to meet its

commitments. We must continue to do so, for, as the Secretary-General said in his perceptive introduction to this debate, the progress so far made is still not irreversible. Moving the peace process forward requires continued, steady movement by all the parties in line with their reciprocal obligations. Backsliding in one area by one party could still send the country back into a negative cycle and a return to violence. We must not let this happen.

On disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement (DDRRR), we all need seriously to get down to business. On the one hand, the parties must move ahead in providing full information and, in liaison with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), in drawing up and implementing realistic plans for the DDRRR of the armed groups. On the other hand, the international community must be ready to assist in taking forward these plans. The United Kingdom stands ready to play its part alongside other donors. Serious and practical DDRRR planning is essential to move the peace process forward, but also to build confidence among the parties and to show members of the armed groups that there is a real alternative to fighting.

At the same time, MONUC should be ready to respond to early requests for DDRRR and, in coordination with other parts of international community, to provide practical assistance, as far as is feasible, within its existing mandate and within its capacity.

The recent meetings between some of the leaders of the Lusaka parties, in particular the meeting between President Kabila and President Kagame, have been extremely important in building up the necessary confidence to move ahead with both DDRRR and the withdrawal process. It is vital that such exchanges should continue. It is encouraging news that President Kabila and President Kagame have agreed to stay in regular contact.

The United Kingdom also fully supports the work of the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire, and his team. Their current effort to engage the Congolese people in the dialogue and to identify representatives from all the communities across the country is absolutely crucial. All Congolese people need to know that they have a say and a stake in the future of their country. Only a genuinely open, representative and inclusive dialogue can provide the basis for peace and stability. The preparatory meeting for the dialogue, which is now scheduled for 20 August, must drive this process forward. We call on all parties to cooperate fully with the facilitator and to allow full access, including by civil society, to the facilitator and his representatives.

Progress in the peace process should mean an easing of the plight of the Congolese people, but there is clearly a dire need for humanitarian assistance across the country. As the Secretary-General said, we learned recently from various non-governmental organizations of the plight of the Congolese people and of the humanitarian situation, which is perhaps one of the worst in the world.

Against that background, it is very disappointing that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has turned down the recently nominated United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator. I happen to have been a colleague of his in a previous posting, and I can endorse the point made by others that he was an outstanding candidate. We hope that agreement will soon be reached to allow this important role to be filled. Only the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will suffer if there is a further delay.

We also call once more on all parties to allow full, unimpeded access to United Nations and non-governmental organization personnel who are working to provide humanitarian assistance, and to ensure that their security and safety are respected.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I will now make a statement in my capacity as representative of China.

At the beginning of the meeting, I expressed on behalf of the members of the Security Council our highest respects to Ambassador Kamel Morjane. Now I would like associate myself fully with all the kind words addressed to him by previous speakers.

The peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is now at a critical juncture. If it does not move forward, it will slide back. It is therefore a challenge for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the States in the Great Lakes region and the United Nations to find a way to maintain this hard-won momentum for peace and to push forward the peace process in order to achieve lasting peace and development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

and the Great Lakes region. However, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains so complicated that no quick solutions can be easily found. The Security Council should therefore seize the opportunity, remain focused and advance the peace process in a step-by-step and well-planned manner. I share the views expressed by many of our colleagues in this regard. At this stage, there are three questions that deserve the Council's special attention.

First, plans for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation and resettlement (DDRRR) of the armed groups should be implemented in an effective manner. The implementation of this process hinges mainly on three crucial conditions. First, there must be real progress in the inter-Congolese dialogue. Real progress in this regard can increase mutual trust among the Congolese parties to the conflict and can also help encourage the parties to totally abandon their plans to seek political and economic gains through military means. In addition, there must be a total cessation of assistance of all kinds, weaponry and military assistance in particular, to the armed groups. The countries concerned must scrupulously honour their commitments made in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. In this regard, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) should exercise, within its capacities, effective monitoring over the DDRRR process of the armed groups by strengthening its coordination with the Joint Military Commission. Furthermore, there must be timely and adequate financial and economic assistance from the international community so as to make DDRRR process an integral part of the peace process.

Secondly, the demilitarization of Kisangani should be realized as soon as possible. We endorse the proposed increase in MONUC's deployment in Kisangani and recommend that MONUC step up its contacts with the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma), with a view to putting pressure on RCD-Goma to implement Security Council resolution 1304 (2000). We support the holding of the inter-Congolese dialogue on Congolese territory at an appropriate time and free of foreign interference. The realization of the United Nations goal at Kisangani will mark an important step in the peace process.

Thirdly, the third phase of deployment of MONUC represents a crucial step taken by the United Nations to promote and consolidate a durable peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the entire Great Lakes region. Member States and the Secretariat should therefore remain ready to ensure that both human and material resources will be in place promptly once the decision for deployment is made.

In addition, economic reconstruction and development are vital to lasting peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the international community should therefore give equal weight to this issue. The priority in this regard at the moment is to keep the Congo River open for navigation and to ensure that the small projects proposed by the Council's mission to the Great Lakes region yield results as soon as possible.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I call on the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to begin with the pleasant task of expressing the satisfaction of my delegation on seeing the Security Council led in the month of July by the representative of the People's Republic of China, a country with which we have excellent relations characterized by mutual esteem and trust.

Allow me as well to acknowledge the good work of your predecessor, the representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and to congratulate him on the expertise and skill with which he carried out his important duties as President last month.

My delegation would also like to thank you, Sir, for having convened this important meeting of the Security Council on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which will help us to better assess the peace process under way and to consider the necessary measures to end the war of aggression that my country has experienced for three years now.

This meeting allows me to acknowledge a friend, Mr. Kamel Morjane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and to thank him sincerely for this morning's briefing, which gave us a clear and precise idea of the situation currently prevailing in the region and gave us a better grasp of the problems that still exist, as well as the difficulties and obstacles in the peace process, which have to be overcome urgently. The briefing also gave us a better understanding of the great opportunities for peace that exist, which the

Security Council and all parties involved must exploit so that all of the peoples of the Great Lakes region can once again enjoy the peaceful coexistence they have been deprived of for over a decade.

Mr. Morjane, your brother and friend, Mr. Léonard She Okitundu, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, asked me to convey his warmest brotherly greetings, and to assure you that my Government will have, at the right moment in Kinshasa, the opportunity to express its gratitude and the gratitude of the Congolese people as a whole for the excellent work that you have carried out at the head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and for your total dedication to the cause of peace and to the restoration of dignity for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Our Minister for Foreign Affairs has just taken part in the Arusha summit on Burundi, in order to thank former President Nelson Mandela for the important recent progress made in the Arusha process, to make my country's contribution to the peace-building efforts in our neighbouring country, and to deliver an important message of peace and reconciliation to the brotherly people of Burundi, who are still suffering the consequences of upheaval in the region. My Government wholeheartedly supports the Arusha peace process and urges all the parties to the Arusha peace accord to step up their efforts with a view to restoring lasting peace in Burundi.

I would like to welcome the excellent working relationship that has been established between my Permanent Mission and MONUC over the last few months. I would also like to pay tribute, Mr. Morjane, to your inherent leadership and diplomatic qualities, which are, I do not doubt for a single moment, the basis of the climate of trust, mutual respect and active cooperation that has been established between the United Nations and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Now that your MONUC mandate is ending, I hope that the Secretary-General will appoint a worthy successor with a thorough knowledge of the region and of the mentalities of the various parts of our country, and who, above all, will be up to the level of the high hopes for peace that you have raised.

Major-General Joseph Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has at the core of his main concerns the return to peace and the urgent need for the economic recovery and rebuilding of our country. The President of the Republic has spared no effort to achieve this worthy objective, increasing peace initiatives and constantly encouraging or even pushing the parties to harmoniously implement the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and leading them to strictly respect all the Security Council resolutions on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As the members of the Security Council were able to observe themselves, and as was well emphasized by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the relations between my Government and the United Nations have improved remarkably, thus giving new impetus to the United Nations Mission's action in the field.

Everywhere, throughout the country, United Nations civilian and military personnel, as well as associated personnel, are warmly welcomed by the population, the main victim of a long war that it did not cause. This reflects the deep hope and expectations of the Congolese population vis-à-vis the United Nations action in the Congo. This also clearly reveals the appreciation of the Congolese population for the great work done by United Nations personnel and associated personnel in the utmost dedication and selflessness. I would also like to thank, from the bottom of my heart, all those countries that allowed their sons and daughters to come to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to serve the just cause of peace.

We can affirm with certainty that the peace process begun in Lusaka is on the right track overall. There is a real opportunity for peace that must be capitalized on. There are, unfortunately, a certain number of obstacles. These obstacles or problems must be identified and clinically analysed, in a spirit of impartiality, in the framework of an overall approach to the crisis in the Great Lakes region and in the greater interest of a return to peace and the peaceful coexistence of our States, in order to enable us to take concrete measures to overcome them.

To do this, it is crucial that we establish relations of trust between our States. The Security Council must also consolidate and solidify the partnership that it has patiently sealed with the signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, as well as with the Political Committee and the Joint Military Commission.

At the same time as the peace process develops, a serious and thorough discussion must begin so that, at the right time, we can all take the necessary measures to restore this trust, which would certainly have the effect of ensuring a return to normalcy in the Great Lakes region and finally doing away with chaos and despair.

In this regard, I strongly encourage the Security Council, particularly the permanent members, to constantly reassess its management of the Great Lakes crisis so that it will be able in unity to continue to exercise influence and to have a positive impact on the overall peace process.

With respect to the inter-Congolese dialogue, President Masire, the facilitator of the dialogue, informed us of his decision to postpone the pre-dialogue, planned for 16 July, to 20 August 2001. He gave us the reasons for this postponement. We understand them, and we have assured him of our total cooperation so that this meeting can take place on the new date, being aware of its importance for improving the prospects for peace. The Council will most certainly have noted the link that the facilitator establishes between the dialogue and the foreign forces, whose prior withdrawal would greatly help to ensure that the inter-Congolese dialogue runs smoothly.

As for the question of the defence of human rights, the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Garreton, is currently conducting a visit at the invitation of my Government. It would be useful for the Security Council to look at the Special Rapporteur's reports in order to put an end to impunity and so that war criminals can be held accountable for their actions. We also hope that the Special Rapporteur will be able to provide us with useful information as to the implementation of the different national programmes in this area, particularly those concerning the demobilization and the reintegration of child soldiers and those relating to the protection of vulnerable persons.

I would also like to inform members that following the national conference on human rights, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on 30 June 2001, adopted a Congolese Charter of Human Rights and Rights of Peoples, which contains many relevant provisions, on such matters as the abolition of the death penalty, democracy as a means of access to power, the secular nature of the State or the equality of citizens.

As for the plundering of the natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in violation of its national sovereignty, this phenomenon is continuing at an unbridled pace. My Government urges the Panel of Experts created in this regard to continue its investigations and to complete its work within the scheduled time in order to allow the Council to take all the necessary measures to put an end to all illegal activities in exploitation of resources that belong, in the end, to the Congolese people and that are simply fuelling the pursuit of the war of aggression. To this end, my Government assures the Council of its full cooperation with the Panel of Experts.

As for disengagement, the Council, through its resolution 1341 (2001), had demanded that the parties fully implement the Kampala plan and the Harare sub-plans for disengagement and redeployment of forces, without reservation and within the time-frame of 14 days envisaged by the Harare Agreement, beginning 15 March 2001.

There are still some difficulties in the northern part of the country. Indeed, despite the commitment taken at the eleventh meeting of the Political Committee, one of the parties still has not completed its disengagement and redeployment to its new defensive positions as defined by the Harare sub-plans, and this in violation of Security Council resolutions 1341 (2001) and 1355 (2001). This intentional delay does not allow the central Government to fully assume its responsibilities, especially through the implementation of a civil administration in the zones to be evacuated within the disengagement line fixed by the Harare sub-plans. This party affirms once again that it is completely disengaged. If this is the case, I am pleased. But, in any case, it cannot skirt its obligation to let the United Nations observe the extent of its disengagement, a task that MONUC should tackle as soon as possible.

All the speakers this morning have emphasized the necessary demilitarization of the city of Kisangani. Indeed, Kisangani is still not demilitarized in accordance with resolution 1304 (2000) of 6 June 2000. What is worse, some call for strengthening the occupation of the city. Even worse are the threats of secession and division of the country, which are made

in contempt of the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, principles which have often been reaffirmed by the Security Council.

It is crucially important that the city of Kisangani, with its population that continues to suffer enormously from the torments and aftermath of war, stop being the symbol of the martyrdom of an entire nation; rather it should now become the political and physical symbol of revival and the return to dignity of the entire Congolese people, the symbol of hope for a better life for present and future generations of my country.

This is very important since the population of Kisangani has a fervent desire to see the occupying forces leave. The non-demilitarization of the city might simply strengthen the Congolese people's growing feeling of humiliation. The history of the world shows clearly that such a feeling brings with it the serious threat of extremist uprisings. We must avoid this together.

As for the withdrawal of foreign forces and disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation, or resettlement (DDRRR), all the leaders of the region have been able to confirm their willingness to withdraw from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in accordance with the order established by resolution 1304 (2000). Certain parties have turned their words into deeds, and are indeed withdrawing some of their contingents. Others show reluctance to do so. Others combine withdrawal with rotation and redeployment, and express their willingness to maintain troops in border towns of the Democratic Republic of the Congo which are — oddly enough — located in areas that are rich in natural resources.

All of these withdrawal and deployment movements must be monitored, which raises the question of the need to increase the military personnel of MONUC devoted to this task. My Government has already put forward a figure of 20,000 peacekeepers and hopes that this estimate will be taken into consideration in the upcoming deliberations of the Council on this question.

In its resolution 1341 (2001), the Council requested the elaboration of a plan and a specific timetable that would lead to the finalization of the full and orderly withdrawal of foreign troops and of plans for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement. This has not yet been done. It would be advisable for the Council, through MONUC, to help the parties draw up these plans, so that the third phase of the deployment of MONUC, as requested by all of the parties, could become a reality.

My Government is helping to finalize many details of the withdrawal and disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement plans. In this specific context, my Government would like to inform the Council that it has set up cantonment sites that MONUC and international observers should visit, if they have not yet done so.

With respect to the security concerns raised by certain parties and in particular by Rwanda, there is an acute need for trust, which we must establish at all costs. For us, the Congolese people, these security concerns represent yet another pretext aimed at maintaining the Rwandan occupation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Let us recall that from 1997 to 1998, my country benefited from cooperation with Rwanda, in the form of technical military assistance, with a view to helping to reorganize the Congolese armed forces. Throughout that entire period, no one ever mentioned any security concerns, nor any relating to the former Rwandan Army forces (ex-FAR) or Interahamwe activities.

Nor can my country forget that it took months for Rwanda to recognize the extent of its intervention. It then used as a justification the need to defend those Congolese whose nationality was supposedly being questioned and who were reportedly being persecuted by the Congolese authorities.

The Congolese people recall that they followed attentively the Council's debate on 7 February this year. They heard each member of the Council make comments and ask relevant and specific questions of the President of Rwanda, namely concerning the presence of forces of aggression on the Congolese territory, the permeability of common borders and the need to build a free, secure and democratic Rwandan society based on human rights, equality and respect for diversity. From our point of view, the answers were not convincing.

Nevertheless, my Government is aware of the fact that security concerns — whether genuine or not —

determine the attitude of the Rwandan authorities in formulating their foreign policy, in particular in the region.

My Government would like to recall that these concerns stem fundamentally from justice denied — justice denied for the thousands of Rwandans who were the victims of genocide; justice denied for the thousands of Rwandans who were the victims of human rights violations, crimes against humanity, massacres, summary executions and serious violations of international humanitarian law, even if those acts are not explicitly covered by article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1948; and, finally, justice denied for those millions of Congolese who perished as a result of the war of aggression.

We would like to stress that it is imperative to address the question of impunity and bring to justice those responsible for the most serious crimes. On their behalf, on behalf of all the victims, we dare to call for this justice.

With a view to tackling the question of the settlement of the war of aggression, my Government has taken the initiative of beginning direct contacts with the leaders of aggressor countries. The Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, whose presence here today we welcome, has also become personally involved, inter alia by organizing a tripartite meeting in Lusaka early this month. We would like to thank him most sincerely for this initiative and to ask him to continue along this path, as well as to explore other paths that would allow for the successful and early conclusion of the peace process.

In line with its continuing quest to establish and build confidence, my Government would like to inform the Council of the following facts. First, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has no hidden agenda in Rwanda. Secondly, the Democratic Republic of the Congo believes that all Rwandans who would like to live in their own country have the right to do so and should be authorized to return home. The others should seek asylum elsewhere, as my country wishes to remain from now on a transit country.

Thirdly, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which bears no responsibility for the Rwandan genocide of 1994, will not tolerate its territory being used as a base for the launching of operations aimed at destabilizing neighbouring countries with which it wishes to be on good terms. Fourthly, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is convinced that any peace will be fragile if the peoples of the Great Lakes region have no guarantees of lasting security.

Fifthly, the Democratic Republic of the Congo believes that these security guarantees should not come at the expense of its sovereignty nor interfere with its territorial integrity. Sixthly, the Democratic Republic of the Congo believes that a just and lasting solution is within our reach. We must seek it and find it through a frank and sincere dialogue, in a bilateral framework, of course, but — better still — in the framework of an international conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region.

The establishment and the strengthening of relations of trust must be strengthened through a greater credibility of the United Nations and its Security Council. Failing this, the partnership that the Council has patiently built with the parties linked to the Lusaka Agreement might crumble altogether.

As proof of this, the results of the Council's mission to the Great Lakes region — which we at home call the Levitte mission — were greatly appreciated by our people. The promises the Council made have been kept. The reopening of the riverine network for humanitarian aid and trade between Kinshasa and Kisangani is now a reality. It has also given rise to great interest on the part of the neighbouring countries directly concerned, whose hope it is that the opening of the waterway could extend to the tributaries of the Congo River, including the Ubangi River.

This represents a fresh opportunity for MONUC to explore, inter alia by broadening the membership of the Congo River Basin Commission, which it oversees along with the concerned parties, to all countries that might be interested in taking part in it.

Similarly, the 40-odd small, quick-impact projects that were identified by the Council mission are already beginning to be implemented. These all are tangible actions that prompt admiration of the United Nations and give credibility to its actions. It is in order to strengthen this credibility that my Government has invited the Security Council to ensure that none of the parties falters in its determination to successfully implement the peace process.

My Government, therefore, has questioned the Council on three specific points: first, the lack of willingness of one of the parties to disengage fully in the province of Equateur; secondly, the non-demilitarization of Kisangani; and thirdly, the orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces.

My Government believes that the Council must, in order to preserve its credibility and prevent the peace process from being called into question, implement the measures it has proposed, so that the reluctant parties that have not yet complied with the relevant provisions of the Council's resolutions can be induced to do so. It must also take measures as authorized by the Charter of the United Nations, mainly in Articles 39 to 42.

Only in this way can we hope to attain the immediate objective of the return of a lasting peace to my country and to the entire Great Lakes region.

However, we cannot overlook the fact that there are other, equally massive challenges facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We must restore balances that no longer exist and rebuild, practically from scratch, an effective State that is concerned with the most basic rights of its citizens, and we must do so on a sound and democratic basis. It must be a State that is capable of ensuring lasting peace accompanied by lasting development, for both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the entire Great Lakes region. Lastly, it must be a State that is imbued with the highest objectives of humankind: peace, justice and prosperity.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country.

The next speaker is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. De Ruyt (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this statement. I am particularly gratified that my first statement to the Security Council on behalf of the European Union should be on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a matter that, as members know, is of particular interest to my country.

This public meeting of the Security Council is most timely. It allows us to review United Nations action in the field, to evaluate the practical achievements of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and to propose improvements in that peacekeeping operation for the near future.

The European Union thanks the Secretary-General for his presence here today and for his personal involvement in this difficult matter. Along with previous speakers, we congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kamel Morjane, on his outstanding performance as head of MONUC over the past 20 months. The task of deploying and setting up MONUC was by no means easy, but the challenge was taken up with courage and spirit. It will not be easy to replace Ambassador Morjane, but the European Union urges that this be done without delay, as it would be particularly inopportune to leave such a strategic post vacant in the present circumstances.

The international community hopes for a return to peace and economic recovery in the Great Lakes region, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is most unusual geopolitically, as it lies at the centre of the African continent, and which is exceptionally rich in a wide variety of natural resources, whose overexploitation by the belligerents — without the least benefit to the people of the Congo — is one of the leading causes of the conflict. The international community is well aware that regional stability depends on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The European Union has consistently affirmed that only a political solution to the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be viable. Should the belligerent parties choose to pursue the military option, that would only lead to further suffering, of which a population already hard-pressed by years of war has had enough.

The European Union considers that the window of opportunity which has been open in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since the beginning of the year remains despite the real danger that the situation could erode. In the eyes of the European Union, the international community's diplomatic efforts must now

concentrate above all on the following: national dialogue; the economic situation of the country, and foreign aid; withdrawal of foreign troops; and the process of the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement of armed factions.

The European Union has taken note of Sir Ketumile Masire's announcement that the formal start of the inter-Congolese dialogue process would be postponed to 20 August 2001 as a result of the consultations now under way between the facilitator's team and civil society entities. It is vital that the meeting be held without further postponement. Such a dialogue must accompany the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement; it will test the desire of the parties to seek a lasting solution to the conflict. The European Union believes that the participants in the dialogue will set realistic goals and will decide on a compact time-frame. The facilitator can count on the support of the European Union.

The renewed commitment of the international community and the gradual and balanced resumption of cooperation assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are dependent on the resumption of dialogue, on progress in that dialogue, and on overall progress in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement.

On the subject of assistance, it is possible to go beyond mere emergency humanitarian assistance. For that reason, the European Union has decided on a gradual resumption of cooperation — a resumption based on progress in the field — and has decided that this should extend to the whole population. The European Union welcomes the fact that international financial institutions are currently moving in the same direction, and it hopes that other donor countries will announce their participation in such endeavours, for example at the next meeting coordinated by the World Bank. In that context, we underscore the need for all humanitarian workers to have access to all parts of the territory of the country.

Through the European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, who visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo last week, the European Union has confirmed its readiness to disburse 120 million euros in assistance contingent on concrete progress in the peace process and in the inter-Congolese dialogue.

As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has said, MONUC is now facing real difficulties, especially in Kisangani, a city that which we hope will become a symbol of national reconciliation. The immediate demilitarization of Kisangani is necessary to bring that about. But there must also be genuine disengagement in the rest of the country in strict compliance with the disengagement plans approved at Kampala and at Harare.

To that end it is necessary jointly to keep the pressure on all parties and thus to put their desire for peace to the test. We must also encourage bilateral contacts between various regional leaders, such as the recent meeting, in the presence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, between Presidents Kabila and Kagame parallel to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity.

Let me speak briefly about the serious issue of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement, to which nearly all speakers have made reference. The question of a plan for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement is a vital one, because the problem of the armed factions that are at large in the eastern Congo, with the attendant risk of destabilization, is a key — indeed the key — to this conflict. Recent developments suggest that the international community may very soon need to implement such a plan. The requirements must be known as soon as possible so that a carefully devised, effective programme can be formulated and so that the donor community can contribute. But developing such programmes is a complex matter. We hope that the United Nations, as the natural body to steer such a plan, will, through the Secretary-General, provide the necessary impetus to launch it, and that a follow-up mechanism will be created to ensure that preparations are speedily made.

The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union has mandated the Union's Special Representative to contact the Secretary-General and ask him to appoint a pilot body to draw up and implement a plan. The mandate and the staff of MONUC will probably have to be modified to implement such a programme. With the necessary sense of urgency, the European Union will press the Security Council to take action to adapt MONUC's mandate as required. For its part, the European Union

would certainly be one of the major contributors to the establishment of such a programme.

In conclusion, the European Union expresses the hope that the parties to the conflict will make every effort to ensure the success of the Lusaka Agreement and that they will heed the message from the international community, headed by the Security Council, the guarantor of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with arrangements made among members of the Council, I shall adjourn the meeting shortly and resume it this afternoon. Following statements made by the speakers remaining on my list, Ambassador Morjane will respond to questions raised by members of the Council and we will adopt the presidential statement.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda) (*spoke in French*): Rwanda warmly welcomes the presidency of China for this month. We express our sincere satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, preside over the Council and at the outstanding manner in which you have guided its debates.

We followed with great attention and interest the briefing on the situation in the Great Lakes region. We thank Ambassador Kamel Morjane for his work as Special Representative of the Secretary-General. He has fought the good fight, as Saint Paul would say, and has now completed his assignment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His successor will assume the reins on a firmer basis, although one that remains to be consolidated. Ambassador Morjane is an extremely talented individual. His experience and wisdom will always shine among us and his advice will always be most welcome.

In preparation for this important meeting, on 13 July the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo wrote a letter to the President of the Security Council. My letter of 19 July, contained in document S/2001/716 of 20 July 2001, was a response to that letter. I would ask you, Sir, to absolve me of having to respond orally to that letter at this public meeting today or even tomorrow, for I would not wish to engage in polemics here. Indeed, Ambassador Morjane, here beside me, has strongly urged me not to do so. As the accredited Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Rwanda to the United Nations, I would not wish to say anything in my statement to the Council that might impede or undermine the current efforts of the Secretary-General to settle the Congolese conflict in the Great Lakes region of Africa.

At their meeting in the margins of the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, the Secretary-General and the President of the Republic of Rwanda resolved to work together, as Africans, to find a solution to the Congolese crisis. At the summit of the Organization of African Unity at Lusaka, the Secretary-General brought together Presidents Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As I speak here today, I know that the Secretary-General is pursuing his efforts. If they are successful, they will mark above all our shared success, and especially that of Rwanda, as a State Member of the United Nations directly concerned by the conflict in our region. I therefore do not wish to dwell at length on these issues.

Rwanda still relies on the assistance of the Security Council, an organ of the United Nations, to continue to ensure that all the signatories to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement respect their commitment to its full implementation. Since the negative forces that planned and carried out the genocide in Rwanda and their sponsors still threaten peace in the region, we feel that the Security Council absolutely must address this very particular case and continue to seek to help the region in order to ensure that the forces of evil — those who planned and carried out the genocide in Rwanda — are prevented from doing any further harm. Those negative forces, as we have heard throughout this meeting, are deeply hurting our region.

Rwanda once again reaffirms its full cooperation with the Secretary-General and the Security Council in order to establish a lasting peace in the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.